



Diocese of Norwich
Education and
Academies Trust

The Nar Valley Federation of Church Academies

Executive Headteacher: Mrs Anne Neary

Web: www.narvalleyfederation.co.uk

Friday 27th January 2023

Dear Parents,

I cannot believe that we are just 5 days away from February (where has January gone!) and just a couple of weeks away from the half way point of the year. All of a sudden the children seem that little bit more grown up and just a little bit more ready for the next stage of their school journey. They are really demonstrating this in the work they are completing in the classrooms. Rowan Class amaze me with how speedily they absorb their learning. They have been so quick this week to share new skills they have learned from their number work, phonics and reading and new words and facts they are learning about their natural environment. Whitebeam class have been tackling multiplication and division. I had a fantastic conversation with one of our Year 2s about sharing 12 mushrooms between 3 pizzas, although we eventually agreed that pepperoni was our favourite topping. They have also learned some really interesting facts about Grace Darling. Some of Oak Class have been completing assessments while others finished some writing about The Spider and The Fly. They all enjoyed designing and testing parachutes. Unfortunately I never got to find out the outcome of their experiment but I look forward to finding out.

Attendance

We are working hard this year to ensure that we reach the best attendance we can. **96%** is considered strong attendance and is so important for ensuring that your children learn and achieve well. **95% - considered satisfactory** attendance by the Government and Ofsted as well as us - means not missing any more than ten school days over the whole year.

Attendance this week/since beginning of the academic year

Oak Class – **98.02%** / 92.94%

Whitebeam Class – **97.62%** / 94.41%

Rowan Class – 92.98% / 93.71%

Whole School – **96.06%** / 93.05%

CONGRATULATIONS **OAK CLASS THIS WEEK – YOU WON THE ATTENDANCE!**
WELL DONE WHITEBEAM – YOU EXCEEDED 96%!

WELL DONE CASTLE ACRE SCHOOL – WE EXCEEDED 96%!

Dates

Please keep an eye on the date sheet for any upcoming dates.

Parents Consultation

The dates for our Parent Consultation Evenings Tuesday 21st February (3.30 – 5.30pm/6pm for Oak Class) and Wednesday 22nd February (3.30 – 7pm). The teachers will be out nearer to half term with time sheets for you to choose a slot. Please can we remind you that these slots are 10 minutes long and are to chat about your child's learning. If there is anything else you wish to discuss then you will need to make another appointment. If you have a child with additional needs then we will offer you either a longer time slot on one of our allocated dates or a time in the week before half term. This is to ensure that you have enough time to discuss how they are getting on with their learning and also the provision that is in place for them.

Where you have more than one child in school, we do work really hard to ensure that the appointments are as close together as possible but there is a possibility that there may be a little gap between them. We look forward to being able to share your child's successes and next steps with you.

Tuck Shop

We took a little break from running tuck shop last term but our eager team of Year 5s and 6s would like to get it up and running again. They would very much like to hear your point of view on whether you would like a tuck shop and if so, some of your thoughts about frequency, stock and prices. There will be a survey coming out in the near future.

PE Kits

Please can I remind you that your child needs to have their PE kits in school from Monday to Friday and it needs to include a separate sweatshirt or jumper from their school one. We try and go outside as much as possible, especially the older children, and if they fall over wearing their school one it can become wet or dirty. If your child's kit becomes particularly wet or dirty then we will send it home!

Toys In School

Please can we remind you that children should not be bringing in toys from home into school unless pre-arranged with the teacher or if they are Child of the Day for show and tell. If this is the case, then they will be asked to put it in the teacher's cupboard until they show it at the end of the day. We are noticing an increase in toys coming in and there is the possibility that they will get lost or broken and they do cause a distraction from working. We appreciate your co-operation with this matter.

Clubs

We are looking to get some more after school clubs up and running with the aim of offering one every day of the week. If you, or someone you know, feel able to offer some time and help run a club then please come and see us. It could be anything – craft, outdoor learning, games – the options are endless!

News from our Classes

Rowan

Mathematician of the Week – Isla P, for ordering numbers from 1 to 20 and for choosing to play lots of maths games.

Reader of the Week – Ella, for using Fred in her head and for spotting some common exception words in her reading book.

Writer of the Week – Leon, for his super illustration of an evil fairy tale character and his sentence which included two adjectives.

Shining Lights of the Week (Reception) – Florence, for showing lots of determination in her learning and persisting even when a task is difficult.

Shining Lights of the Week (Year 1) - Etta, for always having such a positive attitude towards her learning and always demonstrating kindness.

What a frosty week it's been! Rowan class made the most of the frosty weather by taking a lovely stroll in the sun on Tuesday afternoon to go and see if we could spot any signs of winter. We found lots of fallen leaves with beautiful frosty patterns, as well as some stunning frosty spiders' webs! We noticed that many trees had lost all of their leaves and that buds were starting to appear on some of the twigs and branches. In science, we planted broad bean seeds, just like Jack from Jack and the Beanstalk! We will be using our observational skills whilst we track their growth over the next few weeks! In computing, we practiced our typing skills and used the

keyboards to successfully type ordinal letters and specific words. In maths, we looked at subtracting on a number line and in English, we have been using adjectives to describe fairy tale characters and settings.

Whitebeam

Mathematician of the Week – Logan for his fantastic attitude towards maths.

Reader of the Week – Carter for working well with a partner during reading sessions.

Writer of the Week – Elarni for her English work in general this week and for working really hard on her presentation.

Shining Lights of the Week (Year 2) - Olivia for demonstrating responsibility and kindness.

Shining Lights of the Week (Year 3) - Brody for demonstrating our value of courage.

Children's Worship - Lola, Molly, Ruby, Tia

Last Friday in Whitebeam Class we visited the church. The children found lots of Christian symbols and watched how a baby would be christened. We found out a lot about the actual building of the church and what certain parts used to be used for hundreds of years ago! We had a super morning and I am very proud of how well they listened and behaved. In science they have been learning about the 7 life processes and in history they have made a timeline of the life of Grace Darling. Linked to history the children have researched the RNLI and in ICT they have made musical patterns on the Chromebooks and followed rhythmic patterns they have made with instruments. In music they have started to learn a new song and were able to give their opinion about a piece of ragtime music by Scott Joplin. They have also written about a Chinese New Year adventure! Well done Whitebeam for another great week.

Oak

Mathematician of the Week – Sammy for using all of the time available on his maths assessment to check his work and to correct any errors.

Reader of the Week – Nataniel for contributing so many fantastic answers during our reading comprehension today.

Writer of the Week – Esther-Rae for showing such enthusiasm for our new writing topic and creating such an imaginative fantasy land.

Shining Light of the Week (Year 4) – Leo for maintaining a really positive attitude this week in class.

Shining Light of the Week (Year 5) – Ruby for always being such a positive and cheerful member of our class.

Shining Light of the Week (Year 6) – Ella for always being such a helpful member of our class and helping others if they are upset or need a good friend.

With Year 6 practice SATs assessments starting this week and our termly assessments taking place for our Year 4s and 5s soon, we have taken the opportunity this week to do some consolidation work in maths, focusing on our recent learning about fractions, multiplication and division. We have also completed lots of times tables practice. Well done to those children who are regularly practising at home with their Tackling Tables online. We have had the pleasure of giving out lots of certificates for these in Collective Worship over the past few weeks. In English we have started a new unit of work involving instructional writing. Our children loved trying to think of a mythical land that includes a magic portal. In Spanish we have been learning and practising some key vocabulary for talking about ourselves including our names and ages and asking each other questions. The children are making excellent progress with their confidence and accents when speaking to each other and to me. We have had three PE sessions this week and a very active science lesson in which we created our own parachutes to investigate the impact of air resistance on how an object moves. In RE we have been thinking about our key enquiry question (why is there so much diversity in Christianity?) and compiling a list of questions we would like to investigate regarding the spread of Christianity. In computing we have been learning to represent the data we gathered in previous lessons as charts and graphs using Google Sheets. Well done for a really productive week, Oak class!

Message from Executive Headteacher

Strikes Update

I would like to give you all a picture of how things are looking currently so that you can plan for the strike day on Wednesday 1st Feb. Firstly, it is important to understand that due to the rights employees have around striking, the picture may change, so I cannot say with complete certainty, but can only go on what I know currently. Teachers are under no obligation to let their employers know of their intentions regarding striking, and so I am deeply grateful to our excellent staff team at Nar Valley for their understanding of the difficulties this could cause, and for their regard to all our Parents/Carers and children, in that they have all communicated to me their intentions at this time.

One other key factor is that staff who are not planning to strike may be affected by their children's school striking and that we may not yet know this picture. This could be support staff on who I am relying to cover classes where teachers are intending to strike.

It is not my place or the right arena to discuss the merits of striking or not, but I do want to reiterate that all our staff have thought about this issue deeply and are doing what they believe to be right and I absolutely support them in that. The funding of education and the recruitment and retention of high-quality staff through appropriate salaries is important to us all. Disruption caused by a strike is far, far less than the negative impact on children caused by not being able to recruit to vacant positions for example, or by losing teachers and other staff to poor work/life balance.

At this time, we anticipate being open as normal at Castle Acre Primary. That does not mean that no teachers are on strike, and it does not mean that this will not change if we have absences such as those caused by support staff's children's schools being closed or staff illness, but this is the current picture. We will of course let you know immediately via ParentMail should there be any change.

Safeguarding

Online Safety; 7th February is National Safer Internet day, and we've got lots of work coming up with the children about this. If you wanted to support this at home, the following link takes you to some good resources from Childline about this really important issue:

<https://www.childline.org.uk/info-advice/bullying-abuse-safety/online-mobile-safety/staying-safe-online/>

Thank you as always for your support and remember our door is always open if you need anything, have a query or even an idea.

Emma Spaul and Anne Neary



Head of School
Castle Acre CE Primary Academy



Executive Head Teacher
The Nar Valley Federation of Church Academies
Castle Acre, Narborough and Sporle